

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 160.380 (2)(d), 704 KAR 7:130

History/Background:

Existing Policy. In an effort to successfully implement all aspects of the Kentucky Education Reform Act, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has initiated a series of efforts to ensure the representation of all ethnic groups at all levels within the state's teacher, principal and administrator workforce. These initiatives are collective partnerships between local school districts, universities and the Kentucky Department of Education. The department's goal of educating all children to high levels must include every aspect of the educational process including identifying, recruiting and supporting a highly qualified and diverse workforce. All students deserve educators that reflect the educational, cultural and geographic representation of our Commonwealth.

Since 1994, the KDE has assisted local districts in their efforts to identify and recruit minority educators through the compilation of data on educators interested in working in Kentucky schools and districts. This database was originally called the "Minority Educator Job Bank". Since October 14, 2002, this job bank has been replaced with The Kentucky Educator Placement Service (KEPS). Every attempt was made to migrate those candidates into KEPS.

Annually, school district superintendents are required to submit a report including the educator recruitment plan, strategies and sources of recruitment, vacancies, positions filled (teacher, principal and administrator) and the number of minority educators interviewed and hired, pursuant to 704 KAR 7:130.

The Division of Educator Quality and Diversity (DEQD) aims to assist Kentucky schools and districts in the implementation of best practices for identifying, recruiting and retaining a diverse teaching and administrative workforce. Achieving equitable representation of cultures and ethnicities to support the complete education of all students continues to be a challenge at all levels.

One of the most challenging problems facing Kentucky's schools in the quest to close the achievement gap is the critical need for diverse, highly qualified and accountable leadership. Consensus exists in Kentucky that district leaders who provide sound, productive teaching and learning, centered on high standards for students will offer solutions to many of our schools' problems.

The Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP) is designed to help identify and train a pool of highly qualified, minority superintendent candidates for Kentucky's school districts. The program is based on providing qualified candidates with actual hands-on experience as educational leaders.

The MSIP is a one-year (July 1st-June 30th) leadership development program for minorities who wish to pursue a position as a Kentucky school superintendent. This non-traditional leadership development program responds to the appreciation that a minority school superintendent may be faced with unique and complex problems as an educational leader. Further, this program recognizes the need for a pool of diverse individuals prepared to successfully meet the academic and managerial challenges of accountability in our schools.

The Program emphasizes the development of leadership skills to increase student learning including skills in the areas of:

- management
- strategic planning
- fiscal oversight
- communication
- community engagement
- the politics of education
- analyses of current exemplary teaching and learning strategies
- complex social and educational issues

Participants will engage in activities such as workshops, collaborative learning experiences, practical experience, mentor/mentee sessions, and meetings with local, state, and national education officials and experts.

The goal of the MSIP is to enable the interns to interact with highly qualified practicing superintendents, board members, search consultants, state policy makers and "educational thinkers" in a focused way to broaden their knowledge base about the work of superintendents.

The current recruitment cycle for the MSIP will start soon with a press release that will invite interested candidates to apply April 1 through May 25. Interviews and appointments to the program will be made in June.

Through non-traditional strategies, KDE has already received emails from four potential applicants. These strategies include civic organization contacts, personal contacts including warm and cold calls, and recommendations from colleagues and other educators. Utilizing a pipeline strategy KDE staff is beginning to identify teachers and instructional leaders as possible candidates. The personal touch validates the intent of the recruitment effort and further supports the urgent need. This strategy proved effective with the Highly Skilled Educator Recruitment process yielding the largest number of minority applicants in program history. Traditional recruitment strategies will be applied as well such as getting the word out through media sources, statewide email announcements, the KDE website, etc.

Since the program's inception in 2003, two of the program's interns have been selected as Kentucky school superintendents: Elaine Farris of Shelby County Public Schools, and Diane Woods of Campbellsville Independent Schools.

KDE continues to assist districts and schools with recruiting talented individuals who can have a real impact on increasing diversity in Kentucky's schools. The DEQD along with the rest of the Office of Leadership and School Improvement will continue efforts to guide, support and assist local school districts as they increase and enhance efforts to recruit minorities into the education profession, specifically in the role of superintendent and other district level leadership positions.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Ensuring that there are sufficient minority personnel at all levels will provide caring adults and successful role models with a special interest in minority students that will assist in closing the gaps, thus moving more students and schools to proficiency. Initiatives such as MSIP will remove historical barriers that have subjectively discouraged minorities from pursuing leadership positions. Further, these efforts will promote a united effort to address not only diversity but also the true identification of a highly qualified educator workforce.

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